



SUPPOSED SITE OF CAPHARNAUM.

In the days of Our Saviour Capernaum was one of the chief cities of Galilee. There is no mention of it prior to the Babylonish captivity. It was situated on the north-west shore of the Sea of Galilee, about five miles from the entrance of the Jordan into that sheet of

speculate concerning it. Dr. Robinson believes the true site to be at Khan Minyeb, on the northern border of the plain of Gennesaret. Wilson, Ritter, and Grove, locate it at *Tell Hüm*, higher up on the lake.

water, and on the great route of travel from Damascus to the Mediterranean. Jesus seems to have made it his residence during the three years of his ministry on earth, and it was also the home of the Apostles Andrew and Peter. It was the scene of many of the Lord's miracles, and had thus a glorious opportunity offered it; but it rejected the Lord Jesus, and its doom was sealed. The name of the city lives only in the sacred narrative, and its site is so obliterated that writers can only

THE LIFE OF ST. PAUL.



TARSUS, THE BIRTHPLACE OF ST. PAUL.

ONE of the most important portions of the New Testament consists of the narration of the labors of St. Paul, the Apostle of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to the Gentile nations. As a man, St. Paul is one of the most remarkable and powerful characters in all history, and as the servant and missionary of the Saviour, he is even more remarkable and interesting.

He was a native of Tarsus, a city of the province of Cilicia, "no mean city," he tells us. Tarsus was the chief city of its province, and stood on the banks of the Cydnus, in the narrow, fertile plain between the Mediterranean and the snow-capped peaks of Tarsus, at the conflux of the commerce between Asia Minor and the East. Saul, as he was named in his infancy, was a member of a Jewish family of "the Dispersion," living in this city. His father had received the Roman franchise for services rendered the Romans, no doubt during the civil wars. It was the custom of the Jews to teach every youth some trade or useful avocation, and Saul was brought up to the occupation of a tent-maker. The family seem to have been possessed of ample means, for Saul was liberally educated, and was sent to Jerusalem at the close of his Hellenic course, to complete his studies under the learned teacher, Gamaliel, who was the most profound student of the Hebrew Scriptures of his day. Here he added to that perfect familiarity with the Septuagint, which, as an Hellenist, he had been taught from his childhood, a complete knowledge of Hebrew and of the Hebrew Scriptures, as well as the whole mass of the traditional lore of the

Pharisaic school. He seems to have been a person of deep religious feeling from his extreme youth, and had already acquired, among "his own people," a reputation for sanctity of life and strict observance of all the traditions of the sect, which he more than maintained at Jerusalem. Being a man of enthusiastic temperament, the young Pharisee became a fierce and uncompromising champion of the traditions of the fathers.

The new doctrines of Christianity seemed to Saul an attack upon the religion of the Jews, and he opposed them with great and active zeal. He took a leading part in the persecutions which were directed against the companions and followers of Jesus of Nazareth, and when the first Christian martyr, St. Stephen, was put to death, he stood by, "consenting to his death;" and took charge of the clothing of the witnesses. After the death of Stephen, Saul's zealous fury against the Christians was redoubled, and he became, not merely the chief instrument, but the prime mover in the great persecution for which that event gave the signal; and it was by his activity that the Christians were forced to fly from Jerusalem. Being determined to carry his efforts still farther, he, of his own accord, obtained letters from the high priest to the synagogues of Damascus, to enable him to seize and bring bound to Jerusalem any "of the way," whether men or women; and armed with these he set out for Damascus, A. D. 37.

On his journey a wonderful occurrence happened to Saul—an event which changed the entire current and purposes of his life. As he and his companions drew near to Damascus, the towers of the ancient city being in full view, a light, brighter than the noonday sun, blazed down from heaven upon the little band, enveloping it and bringing it to a halt. This brightness was not seen by Saul alone, but was visible to all who were with him, and they were stricken to the earth by it. Of all the company, Saul alone was struck blind by it, and he alone beheld in the blaze of glory the vision of the Son of God, as He appeared to the Three Children in the fiery furnace, and to Stephen in the article of death, visible only to his spiritual sense. Jesus revealed himself to Saul, as the One whom he was wickedly persecuting, and told him of His purpose to make of him a messenger to the Gentiles. Saul at once recognized his Lord, and, submitting himself entirely to the will of Jesus, asked: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" He was told to go into the city, and await the revelation of the Divine will, which would be made known to him. The vision then faded away, and Saul, totally blind, was led into the city by his companions, who had seen the light and heard the voice, but had not understood what was spoken. He was conducted to the house of one of his friends named Judas, where he remained three days without sight, spending the time in fasting and prayer, and in communion with God.

Meanwhile the Saviour appeared to a devout man, and one of the few Christians living in Damascus,



THE CONVERSION OF SAUL.

named Ananias, and commanded him to go to Saul, and restore him his sight. Ananias, knowing the reputation of Saul, and the nature of his errand to Damascus, hesitated to obey, fearing that the vision was not, after all, from God; but the Saviour reassured him, and told him that Saul was even then praying, and, moreover, was expecting him, having seen Ananias in a vision. Ananias no longer hesitated, but at once sought out Saul, and in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, restored him his sight and baptized him.

Seeing that he was thus called to the Apostleship, Saul, who was afterwards called Paul, began his public ministrations immediately after his baptism. Received into full fellowship with the Christians of Damascus, he preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God; and the more they wondered at the great persecutor's conversion, the more he increased in strength, "and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the very Christ." From Damascus, Paul retired into Arabia Petraea, by the Divine com-



ANANIAS AND SAUL.



PAUL AND BARNABAS AT ANTIOCH.



PAUL PARTING FROM HIS DISCIPLES.

mand. Here he spent a season in close communion with God, and was instructed in the truths of Christianity. He himself declares that at this period he conversed not with flesh and blood. After this he returned to Damascus, where he resumed his preaching. A conspiracy being formed against him here, he was obliged to fly. He succeeded in escaping from the city, and at once went up to Jerusalem, where he spent fifteen days as the guest of St. Peter, and was presented to the church. His zeal in disputing with the Hellenist Jews came near costing him his life, and he was hurried away by the

brethren to Cæsarea, whence he sailed for Tarsus. Before leaving the Holy City he had again seen the Saviour in a vision, this time in the Temple, and it was on this occasion that he was commanded to leave Jerusalem and go and preach the Gospel to the Gentiles.

From Tarsus, Paul went to Antioch, accompanied by Barnabas, and there preached to the church with power. While there a severe famine occurred in Judæa, and the Christians of Antioch made a collection of money for the relief of their brethren at Jerusalem, and sent it to them by Paul and Barnabas. The Apostles, upon discharging this duty, immediately returned to Antioch, and soon after this the disciples composing the church at Antioch were commanded by the Holy Ghost to send forth Paul and Barnabas to preach the Gospel to the Gentile nations.

Paul and Barnabas, accompanied by John Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, set forth, A. D. 45, from Antioch, on what is generally known as the great Apostle's first missionary journey. They embarked at Seleucia, the port of Antioch, and went to Salamis in Cyprus. From Salamis, which is on the east side of the island of Cyprus, they went to Paphos on the west side, passing along the coast. Here they discomfited a famous magician, who sought to defeat the ends of God, and was struck blind for his wickedness. They also converted the Roman Proconsul. From Paphos they went by sea to Perga, in Pamphylia, thence they crossed the mountain range of Taurus to Pisidia and Lycaonia, a journey attended with great hardship and danger. Here Mark left them, and returned to Jerusalem. The first halting-place of the Apostles in Pisidia was Antioch, a place, like its Syrian namesake, very important in the history of Chris-

tianity. Iconium was next visited, then Lystra and Derbe, in Lycaonia. From Lystra they returned, through Pisidia and Pamphylia, to Antioch in Syria, the entire journey having occupied a period of about three years. The journey had been one constant round of preaching, and was attended with great success. It was marked also by the performance of several miracles. The Apostles made a report of their acts to the church at Antioch, and then resumed their labors at that place. A dispute having arisen in the church, in consequence of certain persons insisting that it was necessary for Chris-

tians to be circumcised, Paul and Barnabas were sent to Jerusalem to obtain the views of the Apostles and elders there on the subject. They made the journey by land, passing through Phœnicia and Samaria, declaring to the brethren on their way what God had done for the Gentiles. The church at Jerusalem sustained the position of Paul, that circumcision was not necessary. The Apostles returned to Antioch.

In the year of our Lord 49, St. Paul set out upon his second missionary journey, shortly after his return from Jerusalem. This journey, besides its wide extent and long duration—covering a period of four years—is memorable for the introduction of Christianity into Europe; though the Apostle's labors were still confined to that eastern division of the Roman Empire which was marked by the Adriatic. Beginning at Antioch, it embraced Cilicia, Lycaonia, Phrygia, Galatia, Mysia, and the Troad; and in Europe, Macedonia, Athens and Corinth; whence Paul crossed the Ægean to Ephesus, and thence sailed to Cæsarea, and so, after a hasty visit to Jerusalem, returned to Antioch. Paul made this journey in company with Silas and Timothy. Luke formed a part of the little band during a portion of the journey.

After a considerable stay at Antioch, St. Paul set out on his third and last missionary journey in the autumn of A. D. 54, pursuing his old route. This third circuit included a residence of no less than three years at Ephesus; a journey through Macedonia, and probably as far as Illyricum, which brought the Apostle to Corinth, where he spent the three winter months of A. D. 57–58. To disconcert a Jewish plot against his life, he returned through Macedonia, and embarked at Philippi, after the close of the Passover; and rejoined his companions, who sailed direct from Corinth, at Alexandria-Troas. At Miletus, just before his final embarkation for the Holy Land, Paul took an affecting leave of the elders of the church of Ephesus, who assembled there at his bidding. He warned them of the dangers which would threaten them in the future, and exhorted them to cling to the faith of Jesus Christ. Finally, "he kneeled down and prayed with them all; and they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more."

Although warned of the danger which awaited him at Jerusalem, Paul went up to the Holy City, and was there welcomed by the other Apostles. Upon his appearance in the Temple, he was recognized and assailed by "certain Jews from Asia," probably some of his old opponents at Ephesus, and dragged into the outer court, where he would have been put to death, had not the Roman guard, attracted by the tumult, charged the crowd and rescued him. He was at once conveyed into the fortress of the Antonia. He obtained the leave of the Roman officer commanding the post to address the people, and, speaking to them in the Hebrew tongue, related the incidents of his early life and his conversion, the throng listening to him in silence. When he told them of his Divine commission to preach to the Gentiles, the people burst into furious cries and rent their clothes. The Roman officer, ignorant of the language in which Paul had



PAUL BEFORE THE COUNCIL.

spoken, could only suppose that he had given some strong ground for such indignant fury, and, causing him to be brought into the castle, commanded him to be examined by scourging. The soldiers were already binding him with thongs to the post, when the Apostle told them he was a Roman citizen, and reminded them of the danger of inflicting any arbitrary punishment upon one who was under the protection of imperial Rome. The tribune was astonished at this, and alarmed to find that he had inflicted the indignity of chains upon a free-born Roman. Learning that the trouble was a question concerning the Jewish religion, the tribune summoned the chief priests and the Sanhedrim to meet on the following day, and having loosed Paul from his bonds, placed him before them. Paul made a defence of his course, but the Council, which had no legal power to decide his fate, broke up in confusion, and a plot against the Apostle's life being discovered the next day, the commander of the castle sent Paul, under the protection of a strong military escort, to Cæsarea, to be examined by Felix, the Roman Governor of that province. Paul's accusers were also ordered to appear before Felix.

Soon after his arrival Felix heard the case. Tertullus made an eloquent speech against Paul, charging him with heresy, sedition, and the profanation of the Temple; but Paul replied with such force that Felix refused to pass any sentence until he could consult the governor of the castle at Jerusalem, who had first arrested Paul. He remanded the Apostle to prison, but allowed him to receive the visits and kind offices of his friends. Some time after this he again sent for Paul to hear him concerning the faith of Christ—this time, it seems, to gratify the curiosity of his Jewish wife, Drusilla, the daughter of Herod Agrippa I. The Apostle spoke to him only of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, and Felix, who was a man stained with crime, "trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will send for thee." He kept Paul in prison for two years, often sending for him and conversing with him, not for purposes of repentance, however, but merely with the hope that Paul would bribe him to release him. At the end of this time Felix was removed, and Portius Festus appointed Procurator of Judæa. The case of Paul was at once brought to Festus' knowledge by the Apostle's enemies at Jerusalem, and they



PAUL WRITING HIS EPISTLES IN PRISON.

besought the new Governor to have Paul brought to the Holy City for trial, it being their design to waylay and kill him on the route. Festus, however, decided to hear the case at Cæsarea, and summoned the Apostle and his accusers before him. The charges were brought against him, and Paul, after protesting his innocence, appealed from Festus to Cæsar, or, in other words, demanded a trial at Rome, and Festus was compelled by the Roman law to grant the demand. A few days after this, Agrippa and his sister, Berenice, came to Cæsarea to congratulate the new Governor on his arrival, and Festus knowing Agrippa to be well versed in matters pertaining to the Jews, had Paul brought before him, in order that the king might hear the case, and advise him (the Governor) as to what precise charge he ought to lay before the Emperor. Paul availed himself of this opportunity to declare the truths of his faith, in one of the most powerful and eloquent orations on record. His defence drew from Agrippa the acknowledgment to Festus, "This man might have been set at liberty if he had not appealed unto Cæsar."

Paul had a double object in appealing to Cæsar. He desired that his case should be tried at Rome, where justice would be done him, and he would be safe from the murderous plots of the Jews; and he was anxious to preach Christ crucified in the Imperial City itself. Festus did not keep him waiting long, but sent him, with other prisoners, under the charge of a centurion of the Augustan cohort named Julius. After an eventful voyage, in which the ship was cast ashore on the coast of the island of Malta, the capital was reached about the beginning of March, A. D. 61. The news of his coming having preceded him, the Christians of Rome met him at the stations of *Appi Forum* and the *Three Taverns*, and welcomed him with great joy. He was suffered by the imperial officers to dwell in a house which he

hired within the limits of the *Prætorium*. He was kept in chains, with one arm bound to a soldier, who kept him night and day, but he was allowed to receive visitors, and to discourse freely with them of the Gospel. He was a prisoner at Rome fully two years, during which time he labored diligently to spread a knowledge of the Gospel, making many converts, among whom were some of the members of the Imperial household. Luke had accompanied him from Cæsarea, and Timothy joined him at a subsequent period. While at Rome he wrote several of his epistles—those addressed to the Philippians, the Colossians, the Ephesians, and Philemon. At last, in A. D. 63, Paul's case was heard by the Emperor Nero, who, finding nothing against him, set him free. He at once left Rome, and visited Jerusalem, Antioch, Macedonia, Asia Minor, Colossæ, and Ephesus, and spent a winter at Nicopolis. He also visited Dalmatia, and returned through Macedonia and Troas to Ephesus. During this period the Emperor Nero began his severe persecution of the Christians. Paul was arrested at Ephesus, and conveyed to Rome, towards the last of A. D. 65. How long he remained in prison at Rome is not known with certainty, but during this imprisonment he wrote his last epistle to Timothy. He suffered martyrdom at Rome, A. D. 66, it is believed on the 29th of June. Being a Roman citizen, he was allowed the privilege of being beheaded, without being scourged.

We have no very trustworthy account of the personal appearance of St. Paul. Of his temperament and character St. Paul is himself the best painter. His speeches and letters convey to us, as we read them, the truest impressions of those qualities which helped to make him the Great Apostle. We perceive the warmth and ardor of his nature, his affectionate disposition, the tenderness of his sense of honor, the courtesy and personal dignity of his bearing, and his perfect fearlessness.



"AVE MARIA! GRATIA PLENA."